

# The Heidelberg-Cleveland connection

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## *A practicum exchange with a West German library.*

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The American Library Association as well as ACRL has a long-standing commitment to international relations and cooperation as exemplified by the ALA Council's policy statement in 1978. This statement, presently under review for revision, emphasizes the importance of exchanging information and librarians world-wide to bring about better international understanding.

International library exchanges serve as a means of increasing communication and cooperation, exchanging information, and fostering goodwill between libraries and librarians in different countries. They are also an excellent form of staff development and staff renewal.

In the summer of 1988 a library staff member from the University of Heidelberg Library and the music librarian from Cleveland State University Library participated in a practicum exchange between the two institutions. This exchange had been arranged between the directors of the two libraries in 1987.

From July 18 to August 5, 1988, Gisela Vogt from Heidelberg, West Germany, did a practicum at CSU Library as part of her academic library degree work. Library education in West Germany differs from that in the United States in that it involves three tracks, one for public librarians, one for academic librarians, and one for top library administrators. Each is quite separate and it is almost impossible to cross from one track to another. Vogt's practicum was part of the academic library education track.

While at CSU, Vogt's mentor was Deborah Greene, the music librarian. Although Vogt was fluent in English she preferred to do her final prac-

ticum report in German. The following are her observations from the report, as well as my observations as the supervisor of the practicum and director of the University Library.

Her three-week practicum was organized to enable Vogt to spend several days in each of the Library's five services units as well as the administrative areas to understand the operation and service orientation of an American academic library. Her specific interest was in learning about library automation first-hand, and how it will affect the services of the Library, especially pertinent since CSU was implementing the NOTIS library automation system.

Vogt indicated several major differences between West German and U.S. academic libraries.

While all West German academic libraries receive their financial support from the federal government, financial support for academic libraries in the U.S. depends on whether they are private or public. Furthermore, financial support for U.S. publicly supported university libraries varies greatly from state to state and within states.

Vogt was most impressed with the excellent service orientation found in most academic libraries and with the high number of staff devoted to access and document delivery services compared to West German academic libraries. She was fascinated with the comprehensiveness, efficiency, and timeliness of interlibrary loan services. Her comments also focused on the openness of communication and the team work concept both of which she had not experienced on that level previously.

CSU library staff members went out of their way to make Vogt's practicum enjoyable and educa-

tional and they also escorted her on visits to many Cleveland area libraries in order to broaden her experience. They also enhanced her visit to CSU through many special social events. She will definitely miss the outgoing nature and warm hospitality of America.

From August 26 to September 24, 1988, Deborah Greene, music librarian at CSU, did a four-week practicum at Heidelberg Library. When she arrived, the Library had an extensive itinerary planned for her, with special emphasis placed on automation. During the first week of her stay she spent time in each of the major departments, including the branch library for Natural and Medical Sciences, the university's computer center, and the Music Library.

Since 1945, the Deutsche Bibliothek in Frankfurt am Main has been the central archives library and national bibliographic center for the Federal Republic of Germany. During her visits there Greene was given a demonstration of BIBLIODATA, the comprehensive reference database with up-to-date references to all recent German publications, collected and registered bibliographically at the Deutsche Bibliothek. The database covers conventional literature, gray literature including reports, conference proceedings, journals, visual materials, and maps, and is updated weekly to provide the most current references.

She also visited the Fachinformationszentrum

Karlsruhe (FIZ). FIZ Karlsruhe offers direct access to specialized information relating to energy and technology, aeronautics, astronautics and space research, physics and astronomy, and mathematics and computer science, on a multinational level. STN (the Scientific and Technical Information Network), one of the biggest online services of scientific information, is jointly operated by FIZ Karlsruhe, the American Chemical Society, and the Japan Information Center of Science and Technology (JICST). Computers in North America, Europe, and Japan are connected via satellite. To her great surprise and delight she met several Chemical Abstracts Service employees from Columbus, Ohio, who came from FIZ Karlsruhe to visit the Codex Manesse Exhibit at the Heidelberg Library.

During her visit to Springer-Verlag in Heidelberg she saw demonstrations of various computer hardware and software, including CD ROM, word processing, spreadsheet and desktop publishing used for producing the editorial, production, marketing, and sales function of the company.

Other communication and transport installations in library buildings included pneumatic tubes, conveyor belts, telelifts, and walkie talkies. Most computers were either IBM or Siemens equipment.

Greene felt that the Germans were extremely kind and helpful to her. She felt that after learning the history of the country with its constant destruc-



*Left to right: Gisela Vogt, Hannelore Rader, Deborah Greene.*

tion and reconstruction, examining the lifestyles and working habits of the people, seeing the beautiful sights and visiting the various libraries, it was impossible for her not to respect and develop a special fondness and appreciation for the German way of life. She will certainly miss the old castles, ringing of the church bells, and many flowers in the windowsills.

As information technology advances and telecommunication capabilities improve, international boundaries and barriers will diminish. Information sharing is essential for a common understanding and appreciation of the problems and concerns of librarianship on an international level. A German library student working in Heidelberg asked Greene, "How can American librarians benefit from examining librarianship in Germany?" After viewing several German libraries and library services first-hand, an American librarian can better appreciate the problems of their decentralized library system. Not only should libraries look forward, but sometimes also backwards. German libraries can learn from library automation in the United States, but American libraries can also learn from their preservation and conservation skills. The secret to success is good communication.

The cost for this particular international exchange was small. The host institution provided low cost housing which was paid by the visitor. The CSU librarian maintained her salary during the practicum and was given a small travel allotment.

Both participants could speak English and German.

The Heidelberg-Cleveland connection was established and information continues to be shared. During ACRL's Fifth National Conference in Cincinnati both Elmar Mittler, director of the University of Heidelberg Library, and Deborah Greene, will participate in an international program. ■■

### Proposed ALA policy on international relations

At the Midwinter Meeting in Washington, the ACRL International Relations Task Force discussed a *White Paper on the American Library Association and International Relations* and a *Draft Report of the International Relations Planning Meeting, Chicago, 18-20 November 1988*, both prepared by Robert P. Doyle, director of the ALA Library/Book Fellows Program. The documents have great interest to many ACRL members, and may ultimately contribute to an ALA policy on international relations. Hearings will be held on such a policy at the ALA Annual Conference in Dallas.

A free copy of the documents may be requested from Robert P. Doyle, ALA Library/Book Fellows Program, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

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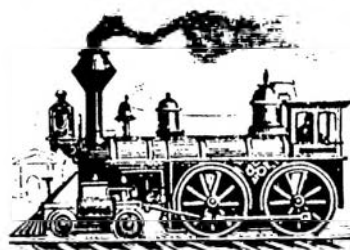
## UCLA Senior Fellows chosen

Fifteen top managers of academic research libraries have been appointed UCLA Senior Fellows for 1989, following a nationwide competition conducted by UCLA's Graduate School of Library and Information Science. As Senior Fellows, the fifteen will attend a program presented by the School during the month of August, exploring issues in higher education, strategic planning, and economics. Formal coursework will cover management accounting and leadership development, as well as communication between scholars, librarians, and university administrators.

Now in its fifth year, the advanced management program is sponsored by UCLA and the Council on Library Resources, with some support from the institutions represented by participating fellows. The program is directed by Dorothy J. Anderson, assistant dean of GSLIS.

The 1989 Senior Fellows are as follows: Elaine Albright (University of Maine), Rachael Anderson (Columbia University Health Sciences Library),

Alison Bunting (UCLA Biomedical Library), Mary Horres (UC-San Diego Biomedical Library), Edward Johnson (Oklahoma State University), Robert H. Patterson (University of Tulsa), Shelley Phipps (University of Arizona), Marion Reid (Louisiana State University), Donald Riggs (Arizona State University), Jane Robbins (University of Wisconsin, Madison), Sherrie Schmidt (Texas A&M University), Helen Spaulding (University of Missouri-Kansas City), Richard Werking (Trinity University), Florence Wilson (Peabody College), and Karin Wittenborg (UCLA). ■■





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